

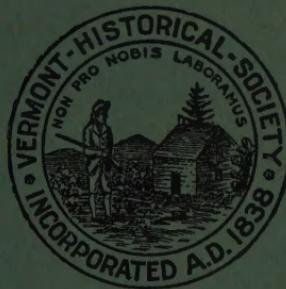
NEW SERIES

Price 75cts.

VOL. I No. 3

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PROCEEDINGS  
of the  
VERMONT  
*Historical Society*



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A History of Irasburgh  
The Windham County Historical Society  
Berkshire Men at Bennington  
A Scrabble for Life  
The Orleans County Historical Society

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PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY  
*Montpelier Vermont*  
1930

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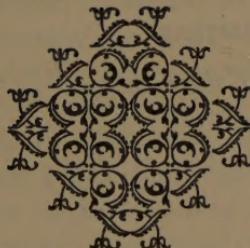
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Proceedings  
of the  
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*Montpelier Vermont*

1930

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NEW SERIES

1930

VOL. I No. 3

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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### A HISTORY OF IRASBURGH

TO 1856

ANONYMOUS

*This account of the town which Ira Allen presented to his bride, Jerusha Enos, as a marriage settlement, is contained in a manuscript never before published, in the archives of the Vermont Historical Society. From internal evidence it is clear that the account was written in 1856, probably to be read before the "Natural and Civil History Society for Orleans County" of which mention is made elsewhere in this issue. There is no indication as to the author. The most unusual feature of the town's history is the fact that the land remained so long in the possession of the family of Ira Allen, under a system of leasing which resembled the English landlord and tenant system. This was, of course, a mere fraction of the vast landed estates of the Allen family in Vermont, and it is the only instance in which their leasing policy persisted. When this account was written, Kansas and the slavery question were uppermost in people's minds. Reference to The War means the War of 1812. Smuggling at the time of that war, and the embargo which preceded it, remind one of similar difficulties along the border at present.*

**A**N Eminent Divine, a very godly man, on entering his room called for the newspaper, saying "I want to see how God is governing this world. His mind had been so directed that in the various events of the day he saw the continued providence of God. As it is so, the various scenes of life, the events occurring

in a nation's progress are but the delineation of the providence of God in the ages that are passing by, and history is the record of his progressive government.

For the Christian therefor history must be important for it shows God in his works. Not less for the statesman than the Christian is history necessary. It shows him not only how God governs the world, but also what effects may be expected from certain causes. Under the same circumstances the same causes will produce the same results almost as certainly as the centrifugal and the centripetal forces hold the planetary system in its accustomed place and propel it onward around its great center. For future guidance every nation should have the history of its past career carefully and faithfully written: and the same rule may apply to states, and even to towns. To arrive at the greatest usefulness every statesman, yea, every man, should be an historian.

Within a short time some interest has been awakened to compile the early history of our towns, from the generation that is now passing away. And we must conclude that this labor is important if it be for no other purpose than just to teach the present generation the hardships and toils of the past.

For this purpose a society has been organized in this as in other counties, and, urged by that society, rather than invited by the inhabitants, I have with some labor made out a brief but crude account of Irasburgh.

Up to the close of the last century this was nothing but an unbroken wilderness. And unless it had been traversed by some of the expeditions sent by England or the Colonies via the Canadas this wilderness had not been visited by the feet of a whiteman. The red man with his tomahawk and bow and arrows alone disputed with wild beasts for the supremacy of the forests of Irasburgh. True, from the discovery of a shirt of mail, a description of which will be given before I close, it has been conjectured that an expedition headed by Major Rogers of New Hampshire passed this way. This expedition was fitted out by Gen. Amherst then the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in America, for the purpose of destroying a village of St. Francis Indians on the south side of St. Lawrence river not far from Three Rivers.

Rogers embarked at Crown Point, Sept. 12, 1759, in batteaux, and landed at Missisco Bay with 142 men. Leaving his boats concealed by bushes and two men to watch them, he pushed on for St. Francis. The second evening after he left the bay his rangers overtook him and informed him that his boats had been taken by 400 French and Indians. Keeping this information to himself, he sent a few men to notify Gen. Amherst of their condition, urging him to send provisions from No. 4 to Coos on Connecticut River, intimating his determination to return that way. He was completely successful in surprising the village of St. Francis, and finding several hundred scalps. His men were so incensed that they massacred all sexes and ages; and burnt the village utterly. Out of 300 residents, 200 were slain on the spot and 20 taken prisoners. Rogers then started up the St. Francis for Coos through this county, and from this shirt of mail alluded to, and some things found at other places, it has been supposed he passed through this town. Charlestown fitted out several boats, and sent up provisions under Sam Stevens and three others. They landed at Round Island at the mouth of Passumpsic river. But the next morning hearing the report of fire arms they reembarked fearing Indians, and moved down the river. Soon after, Rogers arrived. Seeing the fire, but finding no provisions, many of his men died of grief and privation. He subsequently reached Charlestown having lost 49 men. With this exception no white man's foot had broken these solitudes till a much later day.

Irasburgh was chartered by the Legislature of Vermont to Ira Allen and sixty-two associates February 23, A. D. 1781. From its principle proprietor, Ira Allen, it was called Irasburgh in the grant, and previously to 1790 the other proprietors deeded their rights to Mr. Allen for a nominal consideration, showing that he was the real proprietor at the first and that his associates stood then simply for convenience.

It is bounded Northerly by Coventry, Easterly by Benton, and a small part of Brownington, Southerly by Albany, and Westerly by Lowell, Coventry gore and a small part of Newport and contained originally 23040 acres. In 1793 a survey and division of the town was made by James Whitlaw. Still there was no inhabitant of all this beautiful territory, and the earth enjoyed its repose.

In 1798 Mr. Caleb Leach came into the town, then an unbroken wilderness and became the first actual settler. He came in March, and transported his effects, not on a railroad car nor on a job wagon, or a sleigh nor even an ox sled, but on a simple handsled which seems to have been the principle vehicle for those times even in other towns. He pitched his log cabin in the East part of the town on lot No. 108. To him was born the first child in town. After him came various individuals whose names appear on the record. Their residences I have been unable to locate. Among them were Foster Page, James Leach, and Simon French, all of whom signed the petition for the organization of the town in 1803.

Prior to October, 1802, James and John Richardson settled on the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. Amos Chaument[?] and one of them kept the first tavern in town. It stood at the four corners of roads running from Barton to Coventry, and from Glover to Brownington, and came to be a considerable stopping place in time of the embargo and the War of 1812. It is related that at that time on a certain evening forty span of horses meeting from opposite directions put up at this house, on the hill. Soon after Mr. Leach, Mr. Amos Conant came in, and to him was given the first lease recorded on the book of records, bearing date August 4, A. D. 1802. He located on the road to Barton Landing on the farm now occupied by Mr. Rufus Edmonds.

About the same time Mr. Jeremiah Morrill settled on the hill, north from the village, on the farm now owned by Mr. Spencer D. Howard and from him that locality received the name of Morrill hill which it has ever since borne. Mr. Morrill was reputed a mighty hunter and sought with his rifle the noble moose, which was at that early day very common in this new region. Many interesting stories of his prowess as a hunter are related, which I have not time to repeat here.

Among the first inhabitants was Mr. Levi Sylvester who settled on the farm now occupied by Mr. William S. Flint. At his house emigrants found a genial hospitality. Indeed that attribute attaches itself to the pioneers of all new regions. They are more sympathetically hospitable than the same men will be when the country is older. Pioneer life is well calculated to bring out the kinder affections of our nature. Mr. Benjamin Hardy a Rev-

olutionary soldier was also among the first arrivals in Irasburgh. He settled on a farm now owned by Mr. Henry Summers. He was for many years one of the selectmen of the town holding the office almost by possession.

The same year of Jeremiah Morrill's arrival came in Jeremiah Morrill, Jr. and Philip Morrill, both of whom also settled on Morrill Hill, near Mr. Jeremiah Morrill, Philip Morrill where Mr. Emerson now lives. Soon after, and before 1802, Mr. Benjamin Burton moved to Irasburgh and settled on a hill south of the village on a farm now occupied by Mr. Larabee, which has from him continued to bear the name of Burton Hill until this day. In 1804 Mr. Ralph Parker put up a saw and grist mill for the accommodation of this region. It stood near where the present grist mill owned by Mr. Ira H. Allen now stands. In consideration he received a deed of one hundred acres of land including the site of the present village, which was then almost an unbroken forest. In that deed, which was dated A. D. 1805, a proviso was inserted that if this town should ever become a county town no public buildings should be erected on this lot, or if they were, Mr. Parker was bound to exchange this lot for other lands of equal value in some other part of Irasburgh. A provision which eleven years after went into effect.

A year or two after the erection of these mills, Mr. Eben Burton built a hotel and put up a small store which he occupied for a limited time, being the first merchant of Irasburgh.

Nathaniel Kellam and a large family of boys came in, in 1805, and settled on the farm now owned by John H. Keller[?] The father subsequently became deacon of the Baptist Church and had a high reputation for eloquence and ability in prayer. When volunteers marched to Troy in time of the war, entirely unknown to him some one in the secret made a bet of three dollars and eight gallons of whiskey that he would offer a better prayer than the Chaplain sent on by the authorities. The opportunity soon offered and the praying made. It is unnecessary to add that the Deacon won with *ease*. At that early day the road (such as it was) generally passed from hill to hill. Coming from Glover one led over Burton hill, past the place owned by Hubbard Hastings down Morrill hill to Coventry. Their engineers seemed to think the highest ground the best for the transportation of their commodities. And when they moved on hand-

sled, a mode of locomotion rather slow, they had this advantage, that when they arrived at the top of the hill they could get upon their load and slide down the other side.

The first meeting of the proprietors of Irasburgh was held at the dwelling house of Ralph Parker, Esq. in Glover, November 12, 1801. Mr. Parker was chosen Moderator and Heman Allen Proprietors' Clerk; and the meeting was adjourned to the last Monday of December following. Agreeable to this adjournment they met at the same place on the 28th of December, 1801, at which time the proprietors voted to accept the survey and division made by James Whitlaw in the year 1793, and establish it as the permanent division of the town. To defray the expenses of that survey and some other outgoes they voted a tax \$6.25 on each proprietor's share, and elected Roger Enos, Jr., collector. As the taxes were not paid, the town, or that part of it owned by delinquents, was advertised for sale at public vendue, to take place the 4th of March, 1803. The sale coming on, it appears from the record that the proprietors were all in default, for the record stands thus:

"Glover 4th March 1803

Then opened the vendue for the sale of the delinquent rights in Irasburgh agreeable to the foregoing advertisement, & after selling *all* the lands in sd town (public rights excepted) adjourned the same to the 5th Instant at 8 o'clock in the forenoon at this place attest

Roger Enos Junior Collector"

Mr. Heman Allen was the sole purchaser and the whole was deeded to him accordingly. As some informality crept in to the proceedings, the legislature, on the 27th day of October, 1804, passed a "special act enabling the proprietors of Irasburgh to ratify and confirm their former proceedings." Agreeable to this law the proprietors met at the dwelling house of Amos Conant, Esq. in sd. town on the sd. day of June, A. D. 1806, and after choosing by ballot Ralph Parker, Moderator, and Amos Conant, Proprietors' Clerk, they proceeded to ratify their former (agreeable to Pact) proceedings, and establish the sale, and transfer of all the lands in the town agreeable to sd. vendue," and Heman Allen became sole proprietor of all the lands in sd. township, doubtless holding under Jerusha Allen, the wife of Ira Allen, for whom he acted.

The last division of the town took place A. D. 1807, and the return was made and recorded February 9, A. D. 1807. February 13th, 1803, a petition was made signed by names heretofore enumerated and addressed to Amos Conant, Esq., Justice of the Peace, for an organization of the town. March 12, 1803, the town was organized, agreeable to the petition. Amos Conant was the first town Clerk, and his son Samuel Conant the first Constable.

As before said, Caleb Leach was the "*first settler*" and as a consideration received the gift of one half of lot No. 108, lying in the east part of the town, now owned by Mr. Hiram Kellam. Mr. Leach was something of a man in the estimation of his fellow pioneers, and was chosen first selectman, on the organization of the Town, —and he was continued in that office the two following years. He was again chosen selectman in 1807, and this year represented the town, being the first representative ever sent from Irasburgh. He was continued in the same offices the year ensuing and filled other offices subsequently. Gathering ideas from the records, Mr. Leach appears to have been a man of good character, and fair influence and ability. He continued in town, holding various offices and prosecuting his business until after the war. Becoming somehow involved in the disputes or combinations which grew up along the border, he finally sold out and left town about the close of the war. And what has been said of his character, was also, to a good degree true of the other "*first settlers*" of the town. The first lease recorded was given to Amos Conant, who was the first Justice of Peace and the first Town Clerk, and held these offices or one of them for many years after, showing that he was a man of good character as well as of fair intelligence and influence. His son, Samuel Conant, who, Mr. Thompson erroneously informs us, was the first town Clerk, was the first constable of the town, and was a man of high respectability, and fair influence up to the time of his leaving, which was the fore part of last year. He is now a resident of Jamesville, Wisconsin and is much missed in town, although he was *never* town Clerk. Such appears to have been the prevailing spirit and character of the primitive inhabitants of Irasburgh. They were strong men, and had many excellent traits of character. Men hardy and robust, they partook largely of the characteristics of pioneers of a new settlement, enduring hardships and

privations which would appall many of their successors on the same soil, extending to others all those acts of kindness that are so becoming to good citizens. There may have been some exceptions, but on the whole the primitive inhabitants of Irasburgh were worthy men. But in the time of the war it is said there came in a set of men, who might well be denominated forerunners of the "Border ruffians of Kansas" who considered it fair and right in those rude times to seize upon whatsoever was valuable and appropriate it to their own use, in absence of the owner. As for timber, even the best of pine was taken as lawful plunder and appropriated for the benefit of whoever could use it at home or draw it to the mill, and as there were good choppers in those days one family has been mentioned who were so reckless that they would cut down the largest pines just for the fun of seeing them fall.

Such being their loose notions of morality it is not strange that they came to be looked upon as a kind of squatter sovereigns and to be considered Ishmaelites, whose hands were against every man and every man's hand against them, and to be a terror to the whole region. And it is further said that, when any thing particularly bad was done in the neighborhood, when their reputation was known, it was common to say "That's another Irasburgh scrape." Yet this bad odor which attached itself to some of the inhabitants was not really characteristic of the town in general, but rather of an organization that went together as a Club and made their forays abroad, creating terror and disgust amongst those who knew them. And this may have arisen in part from the fact that a Customs house officer was stationed here to prevent smuggling, and many attached themselves to him, claiming to be good whigs whose business it was to look to the Tories, who it was known would aid the enemy with their cattle and produce if they could. And many also claimed to act as officers, who had really no authority but their own passions or pleasures, and this became a lively type of the "Territorial Militia" of Kansas at a much later day.

But if they were a terror to the peaceable inhabitants they were not less so to the smugglers, whose road to Canada lay in this direction. Of all things, it is said, they feared the Irasburgh organization. Scores of anecdotes are told of their operations with this class of men.

It would seem that there was a fair share of honest love of country, and that not much could be laid against them as giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Much allowance must be made for the day in which they lived. They were here, just on the borders of the State, and a state of war will always produce demoralizing results in such localities. Men become reckless of life in their border forays, and they naturally and easily lose the nice distinctions of property and private rights of individuals, especially where the exposed family is somewhat suspected of disloyalty to the cause.

We need to live in Kansas to appreciate or even understand charitably the proceedings of some there who are reputed good men. And we should go back to those days of trial, to learn all the influences brought to bear upon these people then entitled the "Irasburgh Gang." In this view future generations often have to be generous to the infirmities or the irregularities of the past.

If not left by the expedition already alluded to, it was perhaps in some of these forays that the "shirt of mail," found by Shubael Goodell in the west part of the town, fifteen years after the war closed, was left by someone who had disincumbered himself of its protection, that he might travel, or flee with greater facility. Sitting down there to rest, he was, perhaps, destroyed by wild beasts, and his protecting garment left. I find the description in the Independent Standard, December 5, and shall venture to insert it here as the editor has it.

"This curious relic was discovered by Shubael Goodell in the west part of this town in the spring of 1827. It was rolled together and lying at the foot of a large birch tree, between two considerable roots. The story goes that Mr. Goodell, at work near by, set down his jug upon this very relic, and that when he again took up his drink, he heard the jingle or saw the chains which, on further examination proved to be a regular shirt of mail, no doubt of European manufacture. The upper part was made of iron or steel, after the manner of steel money purses, but much thicker, with rings about one fourth of an inch in diameter, and the lower part was made in the same manner, of gilt or brass wire, the shoulders of double thickness. It was evidently well calculated to protect the wearer about the body and shoulders against the arrows or spears of an enemy. When found it was

much corroded with rust, but retained its entire shape, although giving evidence of having lain there a long time. It was subsequently purchased by Lieut. Wilson of the U. S. Artillery, for the purpose of being deposited in the National Museum at Washington. What a host of curious conjecture clustered around this ancient relic! Did some wanderer, long, long ago, lost, benighted in the wilderness, sit down there to rest, and then, frightened by a savage, or wild beast, fly and leave it behind him? Or did some savage after having taken it from his victim as a trophy, tire of carrying his prize, lay it down there to abandon it, or to be recovered at some future time? Could that shirt of mail speak, what a history it would open up to us." (Note: It is said now to be in the Peels Museum, Philadelphia).

There were doubtless many interesting events connected with the first settlement of Irasburgh, not, however different to any great extent from those which accompanied the settlement of all our towns. And, as the original settlers are now all gone it is difficult to gather up even what incidents there were. On the day of the Battle of Plattsburgh a meeting was held at the usual place where reading meetings were held, a school house near Mr. Ira Allen's. The two deacons had commenced meeting as usual, prayers had been offered, and singing, when the sound of the cannons was heard. At this, the people left the house and went out upon the hills near, and sat there listening to the booming of the guns till about 3 o'clock P. M. when they went home filled with lively anxiety as to the result. (It is said also that two of the prayers offered were on the opposite side of the question.) Before dark the next day a horseman came into town entirely unknown, rode up to the farm houses, and reported that McDonough was victorious on the Lake, and the British were driven out of Plattsburgh. He then passed on without giving his name and no one knew how far he had ridden or where he stopped for the night. By the regular course of mail and telegraph it would take longer for the news to come from Plattsburgh now.

This leads me to the interesting fact that victories were heard of in remote localities in a very short period of time even long before there were regular means of communication as at this day.

Two days after the battle of Quatre Bras, when Napoleon drove Blucher back upon Wavre, previous to Waterloo, the natives of India opposed to the British forces there, had heard that Napoleon had been victorious over the Allies. The news had been telegraphed in their own way, and was true so far as that the Austrians were driven back.

Up to the spring of 1809, the inhabitants of Irasburgh had depended upon Craftsbury and neighboring towns for a physician. In March of that year, Dr. John Woodman, brother of a Mr. Woodman now living in Barton, came in here and was the first physician of Irasburgh. He did not remain however for any great length of time, and was succeeded by others.

The same may be said of the law, even a little later. Salmon Nye, admitted to the bar March, 1817, was the first lawyer who settled here, commencing his practice in this place which he had previously made his home. The people of enterprise and thrift did not neglect one kind of spirituality. For at the close of the war, or soon after, there were no less than *five* whiskey distilleries within the limits of the town.

Irasburgh became the shire town of Orleans County, A. D. 1816. Previous to that date, courts had been held alternately at Brownington and Craftsbury, which were half shire towns. But Mr. Ira H. Allen and his mother, who were the principal proprietors of the town, were able about this time to make arrangements with the county so that this, the central town in the county, should become its capital, the Allens giving the site for county buildings and also being at the expense, or the principal expense of their erection. The first court was held here August 1816. Considerable opposition however was raised against the arrangement by the rival towns, some of the people going so far as to threaten to prevent the session of the court at Irasburgh even if they had to resort to force. But this fierce opposition soon died away and the people very happily came to the wise conclusion that as this was the center of the county, it was the best location that could be selected for the capital. From that time business has progressed favorably, although in consequence of the prejudice existing in the minds of many from the fact that some of its lands are under lease, it has not made such rapid progress as, with its facilities and advantages, it otherwise would. Black River runs through the town in a northeasterly

direction, and on it there are, at the village, several valuable water privileges, but partially improved. The valley of the river furnishes a large tract of excellent intervals, and it is thought by many that the soil of the township and other advantages will compare favorably with any other town in the county. For agricultural purposes it has few superiors in the State.

The Congregational church was organized in January, 1818, by the Rev. James Hobart, Missionary, and the Rev. Luther Leland, of Derby. It was composed then of only 8 members, 3 males and 5 females; its first deacon was Zadock Bloss. The first settled minister in town was the Rev. James Johnson, Congregationalist, who was installed February 13, A. D. 1839. The first general revival of religion was in 1827. In the spring of that year three sudden deaths, in the vicinity, two suicides, and one death in his chair, awakened an unusual seriousness in the community. Meetings were more frequently held, Elders Ide and Cheney of the Baptist Church and others of other denominations were called in, and the work progressed, extending into all parts of the town. June training approached, a day formerly given up to drinking and rioting. Much anxiety rested upon the minds of Christians as to the effect of the day upon seriousness, as they were then in the midst of the revival. The day arrived and as one of the principal officers had just obtained hope it was proposed to hear prayers. The Company was formed into a hollow square, and the two deacons offered up their heartfelt prayers. Astonishment seemed to sit upon the faces of that part of the company to which such a scene was new. In the forenoon they went through with their review with much solemnity, but the afternoon was turned into a religious meeting at the court house. Meetings were also held in other parts of the town on the same day, and as a result it appeared that this June training was the day of New Birth of *16 individuals*. In that revival about 80 obtained hope, most of whom gave good evidence of the genuineness of the work in their subsequent life. The Baptist Church was organized later, October 26, 1816. Composed of sixteen members, its first Deacon was Nathaniel Killam, but for many years they were destitute of any regular preaching. Deacon Bloss and Deacon Killam jointly officiated, one being the superior reader and the other excelling

in prayer, and they occupied according to their respective gifts and were instrumental in doing much good in those primitive ages of the church. One of them was Baptist, the other Congregational, and their united labors were a bright and profitable example of that unity and brotherly kindness which should ever characterize the followers of him whose they professed to be.

As Mr. Johnson was the first settled minister, the right of land reserved by the grant would necessarily have passed to him by the charter. Consequently there was considerable excitement in connection with his installation. Committees were appointed and arrangements made by which the people understood that Mr. Johnson agreed to relinquish his right to the support of preaching in town. But after his dismission he commenced an action to recover the right himself. The suit had various fortunes, alternating between the parties, first towards this Town and then towards the claimant until it was finally arranged by paying Mr. Johnson a sum of money and his giving a quit claim of the entire right to the town. It is said that very few of these rights granted to the first settled ministers in the various towns were ever beneficial either to the ministry or the Church.

The churches in Irasburgh have had a chequered history. At one time prosperous and flourishing; and then cold and declining. At the present time the Methodist Church is quite low, having no stationed preacher; the Congregational Church numbers not one third so many as it has in some former times, although it is even at that, more prosperous than either of the others. Perhaps the Church members too will charge their want of success and spirituality to "lease land." Certain it is that for some cause, the Churches are very cold and low, giving promise of the opposite of prosperity and success. They have their comfortable and convenient houses of worship but the occupants are few. I have occupied much of your time, but bear with me for a moment while I give a short notice of the public press in Irasburgh.

The Yeomans Record published and edited by E. Rawson was established in the fall of 1845, and ran about three years when it passed into the hands of A. G. Conant who published it less than a year, when it was attached for debt and was consigned to William H. Rand, and afterwards passed back into the hands of E. Rawson who continued to publish it till the spring of

1850 when it died. In May of the same year Mr. L. B. Jameson, now of Chicago, Ill., started the Orleans County Gazette, edited by his brother, John A. Jameson, now also of Chicago. The Gazette was considerably larger than the Record, and was much better conducted. The highest number of subscribers at one time was 700. It was published by Jameson three years, when it was sold to James M. Dana, now of Montpelier. He published it three years when it was nearly run out. It then passed into the hands of G. W. Hartshorn who enlarged it and published it about eight months, and from him it passed into the hands of Sylvester Howard, Jr., who took a partner and published it under the editorship of Howard & Morris and sold out to the North Union. The first of January, 1856, the Independent Standard edited and published by Mr. A. A. Earle, commenced its career and is now thought to be firmly established, circulating over 1100 copies. It may not be improper briefly to speak of the history and present condition of the lease lands difficulty of Irasburgh in this connection. In doing so I shall be obliged to go back in history. The State of Vermont had something of a Kansas history in its early stages. Much of it was chartered by Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire under implied permission (or supposed permission) from the British Crown. Claiming similar rights and perhaps equally entitled to them, New York also chartered a large portion of the townships of the state, and as a consequence these charters, some of them, covered the same territory. And, as each claimed the title, each undertook to exercise jurisdiction. Hence frequent conflicts ensued. But the people becoming disgusted with the opposing interests, cast off the authority of both claimants and set up for themselves. Their principle difficulty however seemed to be with New York in whose favor the home government finally decided. Between them and New Hampshire was a better understanding. But they came to be a community independent of both belligerent states, and men, as the event proved, both able and willing to take care of themselves. From the ranges of mountains running through the disputed territory, which came near being the center of their operations, they received the name, famous through all the nation, and even in England and Europe, of the "Green Mountain Boys." And their independent mode of life well fitted them to be the most sagacious, hardy, and brave people on the

continent. Compelled to defend themselves against the New York authorities, they resorted to various means to worry out and drive off their foes, many of which were novel in their character and extremely picturesque in their application. The most prominent mark which they applied to the officers and minions of York was denominated by them "The Beech Seal" a mode of marking which would have done well for the free state men in Kansas to apply to Missourians, had not the latter been upheld by the U. S. Army, and whole power of the President. The first victory gained by the Americans after Lexington was achieved by the "Green Mountain Boys" under Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga and shows that these so called outlaws were still loyal to their country. The victory of Stark and Warner at Bennington by the same Green Mountain Boys turned the scale against Burgoyne, who surrendered at Saratoga. It would not be difficult to trace these victories by the line of light to those very conflicts with the Yorkers, those hardy times which tried these sons of New England and strengthened them as the oak, standing in the open field by its conflict with the elements is made more solid than that grown in the forest where the wind of heaven does not blow upon it too roughly. And through these victories, it is not fanciful to *trace the final success of the Colonies*. But as the territory was neither under New York nor New Hampshire; nor had a recognized Colonial existence of its own, it did not seem to come into the general plan of government and was unable to depend upon the Continental Congress for defence against the common enemy.

It was also exposed to the Canadians all along its northern frontier, and lying on Lake Champlain, which was then in the hands of the enemy, its condition was extremely exposed and critical. In view of this fact, although the people were as brave and powerful as any equal number under heaven, to undertake to defend themselves against Great Britain single handed, would have been nothing but the extreme of rashness. Learning that the enemy had collected an army of 10,000 men in Canada with which to subdue them, the "Committee of safety" as also the recognized authorities of the state resorted to diplomacy. They undertook to secure that peace and safety by finesse that they despaired of obtaining by force. A hope entertained by the commanders of the British forces in Canada that they should be

able to detach Vermont from the American cause and join it to the interests of the crown favored their designs.

During the spring of 1780, some of the scouting parties of the northern frontier had fallen into the hands of the British, and as a large number of the enemy had previously fallen into the hands of Vermont, Colonel Ira Allen and Major Joseph Fay were commissioned by Governor Chittenden to negotiate for an exchange of prisoners. Their mission was entirely successful and the British seized their visit as a favorable opportunity of entering upon their proposed negotiations for the surrender of Vermont to the crown.

In this negotiation Ira Allen proved more than a match for the British agents in the subtle science of diplomacy, and so successfully did he manage the matter that the enemy, highly elated, imagined themselves sure of a successful issue. In 1781, Colonel Allen was once more appointed to settle a cartel with the British for another exchange of prisoners, this time fully understanding what would be expected of him by the governor of Vermont as well as proposed by the enemy. In the conference, although he made no promises, yet he acknowledged that Vermont had become somewhat cold in her zeal for the cause, fearing that the success of the Americans would once more subject them to the jurisdiction of New York, against whom they had become greatly exasperated and whose control they "considered the most detestable in the known world." Rather than submit to New York they would prefer to remain an independent Colony under the protection of the British Crown. With these professions and assurances the British agents were highly elated, and their hopes of success were much increased and strengthened. But it would be tedious and perhaps out of place to follow the whole history of this transaction to its termination.

Suffice it to say that by these means the enemy were kept from any open invasion, hoping through the instrumentality of some of the principal citizens of Vermont to accomplish their object by more peaceable means. And thus they continued to labor to detach Vermont from the American cause and the agents of Vermont to hold out encouraging but evasive answers until the very close of the war. Thus Vermont was saved a vast amount of expenditure and probably of blood.

In all these transactions Ira Allen acted a prominent if not the principal part. And for his services and expenditures from time to time he received from the legislature of the state several large grants of land, among which was Irasburgh. Eight years after the grant, or in 1789, he deeded Irasburgh to Jerusha Enos, a daughter of General Enos, as a marriage settlement, agreeable to English usage, and she became his wife. Subsequent events proved that this disposal of the town was exceedingly fortunate for the family. Colonel Allen was made Major General of Vermont after its admission into the union. The inhabitants being at this time almost destitute of arms, he refused to review the militia until an attempt had been made to supply them. Being in possession of large landed property and of a very energetic and fertile mind, Governor Chittenden persuaded him to go to Europe and make purchases of sufficient arms for the supply, having failed to obtain them in America.

Consequently Mr. Allen, in 1796, went first to England and subsequently to France, purchased in Paris 20,000 stand of arms with bayonets, and 24 brass four pound field pieces, and embarked with these in the Olive Branch for New York, November, 1796. The vessel was captured by a British seventy-four, the Audacious, and carried into England under pretence that the arms were designed for a rebellion in Ireland. General Allen prosecuted his captors, both in the admiralty court and court of Kings Bench with all that vigor and determination for which he was noted. Year after year the contest went on, the wilful Judge demanding that Mr. Allen should prove the arms *were not* designed for the purposes alleged, rather than that the holders should prove their allegation. The arms were rusting and of course becoming worthless. In four years all that had been obtained even by crossing the Channel and the Atlantic for evidence, was to get the property released on bail. The arms were then consigned to Messers Bird, Savage and Bird, of London, who according to our phrase were the receipters. In about three years from their consignment, this firm failed and the consignment with their other effects went into bankruptcy. Then, after they were forever lost to the claimant they were magnanimously released by the court. By these means he was defrauded not only of the purchase, but his expenses and near ten years of time.

During his absence abroad his lands were seized upon by speculators, and every means resorted to, to divert it from him, that ingenuity could invent. On one occasion his wife was offered \$100,000.00 if she would give up the title deeds, his enemies politely intimating that that, with the town of Irasburgh which she held in her own right would be quite sufficient for her family. This long litigation in expensive courts, the cost of which it was decided he should pay, together with the losses at home and the entire purchase, seriously involved his estate, which before was very ample. Therefore it is safe to say this *marriage settlement* alluded to, saved the town to the family, or to Mrs. Allen, the sole proprietor at that time. When these facts became apparent it was plain that some means must be resorted to to make Irasburgh of some value to the owner. As Mr. Allen had been for a long time absent, men came in and squatted upon them where ever they pleased, with the exception of a few who sought a legal title to their homestead. The people were then poor, money to any large amount could not be raised, and Mrs. Allen resorted to leases as the most favorable for the inhabitants, commencing in some instances with five cents and increasing until the sum should reach seventeen cents per acre. In this way a *poor* man could come at once into possession of a farm, and all the inconvenience it could ever be to him would be the difficulty of paying over the interest on about three cents per acre instead of owning the right of soil. The grantor became a perpetual creditor. At the same time the promise was held out and even the notice posted up in handbills and published in newspapers, that any man should have the privilege of paying the 17 shillings per acre, the amount of the lease, any time within 10 years from its date and receiving the fee simple of his land. This course therefore was not resorted to as a matter of choice to the grantor, (as every man bought his lands who was able and chose so to do), but as a boon to the grantees. It was the same as selling them the lands and then lending the money for payment, taking a mortgage redeemable in 10 years.

The first lease recorded was to Amos Conant, August 4, A. D. 1802, and the 2d to Jeremiah Morrill, the 20th of October following. This process of conveyance was continued interspersed with an occasional sale, until there are now 60 lots of which Mr. Allen holds the lease, and 50 have been sold, out of 210 which

the town contained originally. So that really less than one third of the lots in town have been leased by the Allen family up to this date.

After Irasburgh became the shire town of the county, its progress, though slow, was steady, and improvement certain. Men of intelligence and cultivation came in, education was not forgotten and the people were not behind their neighbors in their appreciation of civil institutions. There are at this time eleven school districts in town, several of which have new, commodious, tasty and comparatively new school edifices, creditable to their builders and hopeful for the future. The court house erected in 1816, becoming somewhat old for its uses and behind the times for its accommodations, was sold to the town for a town house, and a comfortable and tasty edifice took its place, the expense being met by the inhabitants of the town. This was A. D. 1847. Previously, *i. e.*, about 1840, the Jail was rebuilt, which, although it is not deficient in the department of strength, is no great credit to the taste or skill of architects. In 1852 one tier of lots of 160 rods in breadth was set off from the east part of Lowell to the west part of Irasburgh, making it now, in that part, a town of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles in length. The present year (A. D. 1856) a new Jail house has been erected under the supervision of Messers. Worthington, Carpenter, and Kellam, giving altogether a different aspect to that locality from what it bore previously.

Otherwise the modern history of the town furnishes few incidents sufficiently striking to interest any but their actors. As I said, there are 60 lots of leased land. Still, good judges and intelligent men inform me that on investigation the lands in town are less incumbered than several of the best towns north of them, notwithstanding the prejudice against them connected with leases.

The Orleans County Bank established at Irasburgh was chartered in 1832, with a capital of \$60,000.00. It has a prosperous history and was rechartered, 1849. Its present capital is \$50,000.00 all paid in. Its circumstances are now prosperous and hopeful. President Elijah Cleveland, Cashier Isaac N. Cashman, Directors, E. Cleveland, Ira H. Allen, Sabin Kellam, Thomas Gild and Amos Robinson.

Near the close of the past year a long low building like the low black schooners we read of in the West Indies was reared up in

the rear of all other buildings in the place called a ball alley, and is the latest improvement in the place (the latest improvement, or misimprovement which has come to my knowledge) built by some of the authorities of the county with the expressed assent of many principal citizens and the connivance of some professed Christians. Through this may be expected a rapid improvement in certain sciences.

I hardly dare to close this lecture without adding a word to the inhabitants of Irasburgh. You have a fine productive, easily tilled country, feasible and profitable. Would it not be well to receive the Spartan maxim, "Improve, adorn, seek no farther"? I have alluded to the one great draw back and have endeavored to show that that exists rather in sound than substance. But however that be, if it ever be an obstacle to your progress, be not therefore less energetic or hopeful. But rise superior to all obstacles and show by your enterprise and zeal that of those difficulties you cannot remove, with good health and the Smile of God you can overcome them.

## THE WINDHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*by ELLEN HULDAH NEWTON*

IN the summer of 1927 there came to Newfane, Vermont, from Cincinnati, Ohio, two great-grand-daughters of "Marshall Newton, blacksmith", a soldier in the Revolution and one of the first settlers of Newfane Hill. One of these, the writer, had in her possession a number of letters and manuscripts of the Rev. Ephraim Holland Newton, her grandfather, who had been born on Newfane Hill, and was for many years the minister in charge at the neighboring town of Marlborough. During the last years of his life he had collected the material for the History of Marlborough which was published in April 1930 by the Vermont Historical Society. Among his manuscripts in the writer's possession is a record of every marriage which he performed during the fifty years of his ministry, most of which was in Windham County. The writer felt that this material should be kept in someplace accessible to the people of Vermont and especially of Windham County; there seemed to be no logical place in the vicinity.

The other great-grand-daughter of Marshall Newton, Miss Clara Chipman Newton, who had been spending her summers in Newfane for many years, and was distressed that the many interesting and beautiful things which had belonged to the early settlers were rapidly being removed from the county, conceived of a Windham County Historical Society, and succeeded in arousing the enthusiasm of others. On August 23, 1927, a meeting was held in response to a notice written by Miss Newton and publicly posted:

"NOTICE. A suggestion has been offered by friends interested in Newfane that an effort be made by the residents of the village to band together to preserve interesting historical papers and other relics, not only relating to the families of the village, but also of the towns and villages throughout Windham County. Mrs. Whitcomb has kindly offered the Inn for a meeting to be held to discuss this question on Tuesday, Aug. 23rd, 1927, at 3:30 P. M. Everybody is cordially invited."

Fifteen people came to this attractive old Inn for the meeting. The Inn was a most appropriate place, as it is one of the public buildings which were moved down from Newfane Hill to the place formerly called Fayetteville. These people signed the minute book, and became charter members of the society. The Rev. F. H. Phillipson acted as chairman, and Mrs. Blanche G. Pratt as secretary pro tem.

Miss Clara Chipman Newton explained her object in proposing the organization, and announced that Judges Ware and McRae had informed her that, in case such a society were formed, it was probable that a room in the famous old Court House might be lent for the Collection. It was decided to form the proposed society.

On August 30th, a meeting was held at which a constitution and by-laws were adopted, and officers elected. An executive committee was formed, which was to select a chairman for each town in the county.

The first annual meeting was held Aug. 20th, 1928. Through the courtesy of Judge Ware, the whole of the Court House was put at the disposal of the society for the meeting and for the loan exhibit, which it was hoped would be productive of gifts to the permanent collection. Through the efforts of Dr. Clifton D. Howe of Toronto, Canada, and Dr. Grout, there was assembled a really beautiful collection of coverlids, lace, pewter, rugs, manuscripts, pictures, china, and glass, as well as a large collection of farm utensils used and probably made on Newfane Hill a century ago. Many of these valuable and interesting articles were given outright, forming the nucleus of the permanent collection. An old pewter tea pot held the voluntary contributions of visitors, and many members were added to the society. The membership fee is fifty cents a year, and the life membership is five dollars, which goes toward a fund for a permanent fire proof building. A custom was started which has been continued at the subsequent meetings: many of the townspeople and guests at the Inn dressed in old costumes worn by their ancestors or borrowed for the occasion. Judge Stanley Wilson was the speaker of the day.

In 1929, there was an exhibit numbering over 500 pieces, consisting chiefly of papers, manuscripts, books, bibles, invitations, etc. Miss Helen Tyler Brown of Brattleboro brought a large collection of books and manuscripts belonging to her distinguished

ancestor, Royall Tyler, who was notable as a jurist, poet, playwright, and wit. Judge A. E. Cudworth spoke on the much discussed question of the Tories in Windham County. Daniel Cady and Arthur H. Goodenough read some of their own poems, and the Rev. W. H. Harvey read two poems by Eugene Field, in which he described his boyhood days in Newfane.

*Miss Newton's account ends with the meeting in 1929. The editor had the good fortune to attend the meeting in 1930, and took pleasure in seeing the large display of shawls, embroideries, laces and firearms. The score or more in the costumes of past generations lent color and charm to the scene, which has one of the most beautiful settings in Vermont: a large square shaded by magnificent old trees, with the stately Court House, its classic portico and tall white columns giving austere and simple dignity. Some hundreds of members of the society and guests enjoyed the exhibits, the singing of the double quartet, and the noteworthy address by John Spargo, President of the Vermont Historical Society, on the inspirational value to the present of the monuments of the past.*

## BERKSHIRE COUNTY MEN AT BENNINGTON BATTLE

An Address by JOHN SPARGO

*On July 4th, 1930, at Cheshire, Massachusetts, tablets erected on the Stafford Hill monument by the States of Massachusetts and New York in memory of the men from Berkshire County who took part in the Battle of Bennington, were dedicated with impressive ceremonies. This was the principal address. Berkshire County contributed many settlers to Vermont, and it was the highway for many more who came from western Connecticut. Throughout the struggles of Vermont to remain independent, Berkshire was strongly sympathetic. In fact, if that greater Vermont which was partly a diplomatic threat and perhaps partly serious, had had to become a reality, it would probably have included not only the forty-odd towns of western New Hampshire and New York east of the Hudson River, but also Berkshire County.*

IT is most appropriate and fitting that upon this anniversary of our national independence, and in this year when the people of this commonwealth are celebrating its tercentenary, tribute should be paid here at New Providence to the men from Berkshire County who fought in the Battle of Bennington and by that and other like services helped to establish that independence which we so proudly celebrate. I am happy to have a share in this memorable occasion, and to be privileged to join with you in the dedication of those simple bronze tablets placed here in Joab Stafford's tomb and monument by the State of New York and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in honor of all the men from Berkshire County who fought under Stark and Warner on the heights of Walloomsac on that eventful sixteenth of August, one hundred and fifty-three years ago.

There are other memorials of a like character to come. No doubt the State of New Hampshire, John Stark's home state, justly proud of the lustrous fame of her heroic son, and of his victory at Bennington, will, in a not far distant future, add her tribute to those of her sister states. That Vermont will do like-

wise, I am too much of a Vermonter to doubt. It will be my pleasure, as president of the Vermont Historical Society, to recommend to the next session of our legislature that proper provision be made for the placing here of an enduring and visible expression in bronze of that grateful homage to the memory of the men from Berkshire County which is indwelling in the heart of every true Vermonter. Even though it must involve me in a paradox to advocate such an expenditure with one breath while, with the next breath I join in the upswelling cry for retrenchment all along the line, that awkwardness cannot be helped. Vermont will want its tribute to be placed upon these walls. Of that I am confident.

Because those responsible for this celebration deliberately chose the day which, by common consent, is the day dedicated to the celebration of our national independence, it is fitting that I should take some note of the significance of the day and pay some attention to a certain current of contemporary thought which carries with it a challenge to nationalism, calling into question the wisdom and the rightness of affection for and pride in one's own nation, recognition of a special and particular obligation to it, and, in a word, of all that is comprehended by the word "patriotism." This is a fitting occasion upon which to meet that challenge, openly and without quibble or evasion.

Internationalism is one of the noblest words ever coined in the mint of human speech. It connotes a vision of world order among the most sublime of all the concepts of the human mind in the domain of political thought. It implies an attitude of the nations toward each other, and of the citizens of each nation toward the citizens of all other nations, whose sanctions are rooted in morality and religion. But the rarer the jewel the greater the temptation to the counterfeiter. Far too often the word internationalism is applied to a philosophy and an attitude which are ignoble and base and alien to both religion and morality.

Let there be no mistake about this; there is no conflict between genuine and worthy internationalism and genuine and worthy nationalism. The two things are complementary and inter-dependent. Between base and unworthy internationalism and base and unworthy nationalism there arises friction and strife, but it is less fundamental than the friction and strife which result when a true and worthy nationalism comes into contact with

base and unworthy internationalism, or, on the other hand, when true and worthy internationalism confronts base and unworthy nationalism. No man who is lacking in patriotism, love for his own land beyond any other, will ever do anything of worth for mankind as a whole.

Because I am an internationalist, for that reason more than any other, I rejoice in this celebration of our national independence and have come to join you my neighbors in a festival of nationalism. Because I am an internationalist, I hail with rejoicing this occasion for meeting together here in the shadow of this patriot's tower, to join in solemn pledges that, with God's help, we will maintain this great nation of ours strong, independent and free. The men who went forth from Berkshire County in 1777 were nationalists in the noblest sense of that word. They were not jingoes. They envied the prosperity of no people, nor sought to deprive any people of freedom or independence. They sought freedom and independence for themselves, and they were willing that all other peoples should enjoy freedom and independence upon the same terms as themselves. Their nationalism betokened nothing but friendship and good will toward all other peoples. They wanted nothing for themselves which they were not willing all other peoples should have. Their nationalism was fully consistent with the most exalted internationalism, and its sanctions were deeply rooted in religion and morality.

That was the political credo of the Berkshire patriots. It united the highest and best form of nationalism to the highest and best form of internationalism. For that, sturdy old Joab Stafford set forth from this hill that bears his name, but which he called New Providence to symbolize the vision that was in his heart. For that, too, good old Parson Allen, of Pittsfield, set forth in his sulky and went to the battlefield with a musket in his hand and a prayer upon his lips. For that ideal Ben Simonds, of Williamstown, marched to the battlefield and led his men against Tory Hill. These men and their brave comrades helped to make this nation free and independent and he must be mentally and spiritually blind who does not see that fact as one of the greatest contributions toward efficient internationalism in all the tortuous history of mankind. Upon that day in 1777 whose heroic memories inspire us today, there went forth from New Providence, its oldest settler, small of stature, bent with toil, his hair silver-

white. Henry Tibbits was just a humble farmer. No honors came to him, and he is scarcely mentioned in our histories. Today I pay homage to him as one of those who helped to make this a free and independent nation, and thereby added to the cause of internationalism. Perhaps he never heard the word internationalism, but he did more to make internationalism a reality than many a professed internationalist.

The greatest menace to the progress to genuine internationalism is the spurious internationalism which sets itself in opposition to patriotism and to sincere nationalism. The great vision of a peaceful, cooperative and fraternal world will not be advanced by those who profess equal love for all nations and disavow special love for any particular nation. Mr. Roosevelt used to say, very shrewdly, that this reminded him of the man who professed to love all women equally and to have no special and particular love for his wife. In truth, he loved not at all; the word "love" is not applicable to such cheap emotions whose roots are lust and not affection."

So I answer the challenge here today and avow that our patriotism needs neither apology nor defense. We are nationalists, lovers of this nation, ready to defend its sovereignty and independence because we are sincere internationalists, lovers of peace, well-wishers to all mankind. To make and keep these United States of America strong, secure against assault from without or within, envying no nation, ever ready to befriend all peoples in distress or need, and increasingly giving its influence and wealth for the advancement of peace and good will, is, we believe, the most certain way in which we can help to bring nearer the realization of true internationalism.

We do well to mark our historic spots and shrines. Every such memorial is a reminder to all of us of the way in which our nation was founded and our freedom secured. More than that, it is a witness to our faith in the great ideals of self-governance and expanding liberty within the reign of law. We cannot have too many of them, especially if they come from our hearts and are not simply the result of political manipulation and legislative votes authorizing expenditures from the public treasury. Better a simple cairn of field stones raised by the labors and sacrifices of men and women who feel impelled to give than the most elaborate

monument voted by a jaded legislature to be paid for out of the public funds.

This simple and unpretentious tower holds the smouldering remains of Colonel Joab Stafford, whose home was here, the home he built with faith and defended with valor. But it is not a memorial to him alone. The tower itself is a memorial to all the men from New Providence, this town of Cheshire, who fought with Stafford at Bennington. By the tablets placed in the tower by New York and Massachusetts—to be followed we hope, by New Hampshire and Vermont—it becomes, for all the generations to follow, a memorial to all the patriots from Berkshire County who fought in the Battle of Bennington to the end that this nation might live.

It was a small battle, even as battles were measured in those days of flintlock muskets. Yet it holds a great and significant place in the history of the nation as the turning point of the Revolution. It made the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga inevitable. Thus it was one of those events of which a contrary result would have materially changed the subsequent history of mankind. It is well within the bounds of permissible speculation to conceive that if Baum had succeeded at Bennington, Gates, and not Burgoyne, would have surrendered at Saratoga, and that, if that had happened, the Revolution would have failed and Great Britain would have dominated this continent. The humble farmers who shouldered their muskets and went from these hills to fight were participants in an event whose magnitude neither they nor any human being could perceive, the importance of which the wisest of us today can feel but not measure.

In view of these facts, it is well that we should recall here today that the part of Berkshire County in the struggle and the victory was much greater than is generally understood. There were as many men from Berkshire County as there were from Vermont in Stark's army that day. Unfortunately, there exists no complete record of the number of men from the various towns in the county, but I long ago satisfied myself that the number was much greater than is generally recognized by our historians, who have placed the number as low as one hundred and fifty men. The actual number could not have been less than five hundred and fifty, or about twenty-five per cent of Stark's force. Why, Col. Joab Stafford took 41 men from this very hill, from New Provi-

dence. Another patriot from New Providence, Captain Samuel Low, took 44 men. From East Hoosuck, now the town of Adams Captain Enos Parker led forth his company of 51 men. From the north part of Williamstown Captain Nehemiah Smedley took a company the numerical strength of which is not known. Tradition says that it was larger than the company from the south part of the town led by Captain Samuel Clark, which is precisely what we should expect from the larger population. Well, Clark's company, of which the muster rolls still exist, consisted of 65 men, all in the Battle of Bennington. It is probably an under-estimate to give Williamstown a total of 145 men. From Pittsfield went 39 men, including Parson Allen of immortal memory. Richmond sent 26 men, including Colonel David Rossiter. Stockbridge sent 67 white men as well as a band of Stockbridge Indians under Captain Solomon, concerning which we know very little.

I wish that we knew more of the part played in the battle by that little band of Stockbridge Indians. There is a tradition that they all fled when the fighting began, but it is more than likely that there has been some confusion here and that the Stockbridge Indians who volunteered on the patriotic side have been confused with the Indian hirelings under Baum who fled when the tide of battle turned against their side. We were always too ready to believe ill of the Indian, and it is not difficult to understand how, in a very short time, the well attested account of the desertion of Baum by the Indians in his army was regarded as applying to those on the American likewise. There is not, in my judgment, any existing evidence which warrants the application of the deserters to the Stockbridge Indians of Captain Solomon's company.

There are earnest and fearful souls who are made uneasy by such memorials as those we are dedicating here today. They fear that the effect of such memorials is to glorify war by holding up its leaders for adoration, and by investing it with a false glamour. Of all the vain fears with which men have tortured themselves surely there was never one more vain and baseless than this. The patriots to whom we do honor were not soldiers except incidentally. Husbandmen and traders and priests, they forsook their customary tasks and duties and took up the implements of war in defense of their firesides, their lives, and their liberties. When they had secured peace through triumphs, they turned

again to the tasks of peace. No people have hated war more; none has ever more nobly devoted its genius and energy to peace. The heroic men to whom we erect our memorials were not militarists. They trampled upon no rights of any people. They assailed the liberty and well-being of no nation. They defended their own, and when this defense achieved its ends and the menace was removed from their midst, they beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and turned anew to the labors of peace. Well may we make of this tower and all other memorials of its kind shrines where we pause in reverent praise and thanksgiving for the valor and the daring which won and maintained the independence of this nation.

From one point of view Bennington Battle was a small, even trifling, engagement, yet upon its outcome turned the fortunes of America and of civilization itself. Occasionally one still encounters the cheap witticism that the battle was fought in New York, by New Hampshire soldiers, while Vermont has the monument commemorating it. Today we note only the fact that the battle was fought in a place then of uncertain and disputed jurisdiction, over which both New York and the newly created state of Vermont claimed sovereignty. Against the invading army the militia of New England, sons of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont, marched under the urge and inspiration of patriotism and by their valor and sacrifice made possible the heritage which is ours to preserve and pass on to our children. May we be faithful to the great trust, so that our children and our children's children in their day shall honor us even as we honor the patriots of old.

## A SCRABBLE FOR LIFE

By LIEUT. BENJAMIN EVEREST

as related by IRA W. EVEREST

*Benjamin Everest, 1752-1843, was born in Salisbury Connecticut. He came to Addison, Vermont, in 1768, with his father, and settled. During the Revolution he saw service on Lake Champlain, at Hubbardton, Bennington, and was for a time stationed at Rutland. After the capture of Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen, he operated a boat on Lake Champlain, which was later taken over by the American forces. After a long delay he was paid for it in Continental currency which had depreciated so much that at one time he paid \$70.00 for a drink of rum. One of his well known adventures was his escape from Indians by skating away from them and jumping across a stretch of open water. The narrative which follows was written down in 1860 by his son, Ira W. Everest, then in his seventy-second year. This account was in turn copied in 1891 by Lillie Everest, whose son, C. E. Seamans, has kindly permitted the use of the manuscript. Ira W. Everest stated that this was his father's story as "related by himself as near as I can recollect and principally in his own words." The historical circumstances of this account are so jumbled in the process of recollection and copying that they seem unreliable. The story itself, however, is so vivid as to make it seem worth printing. The editor has taken the liberty of omitting palpably inaccurate matter, and correcting some of the spelling and grammar, which in this sort of narrative seem to have no special sanctity. The lapses from the third person of Ira to what seems to be the first person of Benjamin, have been preserved, as they distinguish to some extent the division between a hazy knowledge, and a sharp recollection of a tale that must have made a keen impression on the listener.*

**A**FTER Benjamin Everest joined the land forces at Rutland, he was sent out on scouting parties, and disguised as a spy he went to Crown Point, where he hired out as a mason, staying there about a month. There was some one there who knew him, and made a considerable ado about his being there, so he sus-

pected that it was not safe to remain longer, and left. He had just got out of the fort when he was taken up as a spy, put in irons, and conveyed in a boat to Ticonderoga. There he was put aboard a man-of-war which lay by the floating bridge till a little before sundown, and then put out from the bridge and came to anchor about half a mile distant. Whilst they lay at the bridge, the wind had shifted to the north east, and it rained and snowed, and was very cold. As they were put on the quarter deck, six or eight prisoners in chains, with nothing to shelter them, they suffered extremely. Every chance I had to see the Captain I would be at him to take off the chains and put something to cover us from the storm, but all I got was "Damn you rebels, it's good enough for you."

Being in this critical situation we consulted among ourselves to make our escape by getting the guard drunk. I agreed with one of the men to get me a bottle of rum and some sugar. I gave him the money and he went and got it. But just as he stepped on deck with his arms folded across his breast as though he had got something secret, the Captain met him and said, "What have you got there?" "Nothing, sir." he replied. The Captain spoke sternly and asked him again. "Bottle rum, sir!" and pulling it from within his coat, handed it to the Captain, who took out the cork, stepped to the side of the boat, and emptied it into the lake, and then threw the bottle after it, saying, "I will take care of you." The man was, however, as good as his word. He stepped up to me later, and said, "Damn him, I will get you some yet." He went off, and soon returned with a bottle of rum. I gave him some to drink, and he departed. I have never seen him since.

After this, about sundown, the Captain came upon deck and ordered some tent clothes and boards, and made a tent over and around us, which made us very comfortable. He took off our irons, and placed a guard of one man at the steps of the quarter deck. This done, he went to his quarters in the cabin, and I saw him no more.

After everything was all settled and still about the boat, we went into consultation about making our escape, and we agreed to drop overboard and swim to the bridge except Mr. Kellog, who could not swim. I then went to work and made a stiff mug of rum and sugar, and we took a drink all around and offered it

to the guard. He refused at first, but was persuaded at last to drink, and I made him drink three good sucks before I left him. They talked with one another and with the guard, and felt very cheerful, and *he* with them. I handed the liquor to the guard and he drank and drank till he was pretty mellow. I got so bold by this time I got the guard's sword and examined it and returned it back to him and praised it well for its beauty, and said, "I wished I could have the honor of having such a one myself, etc."

I gave him another drink. By this time I got my purpose accomplished for the poor fellow. He reeled over partly, and went into a profound sleep. We let him lie in peace a few minutes. Then I went to him, and felt about him and took his sword from his hands, and found him as stiff as a poker and as drunk as rum could make him. I turned to my companions and said, "Now is our time to try our chance at making our escape." "Well," said they, "You go forward and we will follow." I soon laid my coat and the things I had about me, across my head and back, and slipt down into the water, holding on to the gunwail to wait for the rest, but soon found there was no one to follow.

I then put for the bridge, and soon arrived there in safety, and waited some time for the rest to come, but they came not. [*The editor is inclined to doubt the accuracy of the statement that the ship had anchored half a mile from the bridge, for, as the lake is very narrow at this part, a swim to the nearest shore could not have exceeded a quarter of a mile. As Everest chose the bridge, it was probably because the distance was even less than that.*] I then consulted with myself which way to put, for the English army was on the east side of the lake, and the Indian encampment on the west. Their fires made it as moonlight all over their encampment, and they were dancing, carousing, and merry as could be. I took my chance through the Indians, and started along the bridge, but had not proceeded far when I discovered a sentinel placed on the bridge, with baggage piled on each side of him, so that I could not get over it. I crept along close to him, and found that he was asleep and snoring pretty loud. I tried to find a handpike, to knock him over and kill him on the spot, but could find nothing. I then went toward the east end of the bridge and found it was taken up. Finally I got my razor from my pocket and made up my mind to advance as close to him as I could, and if not molested, to tackle him and kill him without making any

alarm. I walked closer and closer till I passed him without touching him. I found no further difficulty in reaching the land.

I then folded my arms across my breast, and proceeded slowly and swaying one way and the other through the encampment. As I went by the Indians, they would often turn their heads and look at me, and say nothing. In this way I went through the camp, and then took my course to the northwest, toward the mountains, at a pretty quick step. I had not gone far before I entered an old field that the French had cleared, where they had dug a deep ditch with a heavy picket embankment near the woods, of which I knew nothing. Being in a hurry, I went heels over head into this ditch full of water. I scrabbled for life and got on the embankment, and had a pretty hard scrabble to get over the pickets, for their points were all toward me. I was wet and cold, and put on speed to keep myself warm. I travelled till break of day, and then hid myself in a thicket of wood, under some logs or trees that had fallen down in a cluster, and had a very warm and comfortable situation through that day. At night I started again, and kept on the mountains, and came out not far from Moriah Four Corners, as it is now called, and then on to Ball Peak, and so down to the lake, to what was then called Raymont Bay, and since called Calls Bay. About eight o'clock in the morning I went to Mr. Raymont who lived there (some say it was Mr. Webster) and here I got something to eat. I told Raymont about my adventures and wanted to have him convey me across the lake. There happened to be one of the British vessels anchored in the bay, and it was not long before we discovered a boat making toward the shore. We then agreed that I should step back into a piece of woods near by, and there stay till they came ashore and returned. He was to find out their business, and if all was well, Raymont was to go to his wood pile and go to cutting wood, and whistle a certain tune. He did so, and I returned to his house again, and in the evening he took his boat and carried me across the lake to Ferris's Bay. I then came up not far from our old place in Addison, and took a gun and ammunition that I had hidden in a hollow log, and steered my course through Middlebury, Lemmonfare, and Otter Creek, etc., and arrived at Rutland, and was there and about that winter till the latter part of summer.

## THE ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

by MRS. JOHN H. BARTLETT, OF ORLEANS

*Because many Vermonters know little or nothing about this Society, the editor has obtained from the Secretary the very interesting account which follows. The Society has about 175 members, including 18 life members and 6 honorary members. It possesses a large and handsome old stone building for its headquarters and museum, and has a considerable start made toward an endowment. The Society deserves the interest and support of all residents of Orleans County, and of all those in other parts of the country who have Orleans County connection or ancestry. The Vermont Historical Society desires to assist this and other local historical societies in any way possible. It hopes to publish from time to time other notes regarding the activities of the Orleans County organization.*

PERHAPS this Society did not really begin its work with the call in the Orleans County Gazette for "A Natural and Civil History Society for Orleans County," which was organized at Brownington Vermont, June 6, 1853. It did, however, furnish a very specific example for preserving the ideals and traditions of the county. The first Article of its Constitution states,—"The object of this society shall be to promote the study of natural history primarily of Orleans County and Northern Vermont, and to collect and preserve, while the first settlers of the County are able to furnish them those items of interest in the civil History of the County which would otherwise be lost to the future historians." Some of the notable men interested were the Rev. Samuel R. Hall, Alexander L. Twilight, S. C. Crafts, J. A. Paddock, D. M. Camp, S. S. Tinkham, Isaac Parker and others who contributed much toward a general appreciation of the natural history of the county. This Society seems to have been an educational affair and committees were appointed in nearly all of the towns to instruct, especially the young, in Botany and Geology, Mineralogy, and of those things of economical value in the county. The last record of this society was in 1859. Ten years later it was revived by the Rev. S. R. Hall and it continued until 1871 when its efforts

ceased to be recorded. In 1887 Dr. John M. Currier of Newport again agitated the historical question and the result was the organization of the "Orleans County Historical Society." Although we do not find annual meetings recorded, we know that the society functioned through the years by encouraging celebrations of historical events in many parts of the County. In 1913 Dr. John M. Currier gave to the Historical Society a large leather bound book containing the early records, and it has since been the record book of the Society. Since that time it has held its meetings regularly in August and in 1922 it voted to hold its meetings on Bennington Battle Day, August 16. In 1916 the Society became incorporated and that same year it purchased "The Old Stone House" as a permanent home for the Society. It is a four-story granite structure built about one hundred years ago for a dormitory for Brownington Academy. The story goes that the granite blocks were quarried from a boulder across the road and were drawn and raised into place by a single ox, under the supervision of the Rev. Alexander L. Twilight, then teacher of the Academy and preacher in the village church. He came to Brownington in 1829 so last year the program was devoted to his life and activities. Senator Porter H. Dale gave an eloquent and comprehensive account of his life. A prize essay on the "Old Stone House" was given.

The annual meetings are usually held at Brownington at the Old Stone House, and all seem to catch the pioneer spirit there more than when they meet elsewhere. In 1927, the sesqui-centennial year, it was held at Craftsbury with the State Historian, Mr. Walter H. Crockett as chief speaker. This year the Society responded to a call from the "Jay Peak Chamber of Commerce" to meet at North Troy. The President, Hon. H. F. Graham gave a brief sketch of the early history of the Missisquoi valley and Prof. Arthur W. Peach, of Norwich University gave a broad and vivid address on preserving the ideals and spirit of our forefathers.

The 1931 meeting will be again held at the Old Stone House at Brownington and everyone is cordially invited to come. We think you will enjoy seeing the collection that has been made, from an old wooden plow to the old samplers, books, spinning wheels, looms, etc. They may be homely but they breathe the spirit of those early settlers.

## THE FAIRBANKS SCALE CENTENARY

by ARTHUR F. STONE

While towns and churches throughout the State have been celebrating their centennial or sesqui-centennial this summer, a St. Johnsbury corporation observed the centenary of the building of the platform scale—an invention by Thaddeus Fairbanks which changed for all time the method of weighing merchandise that had been universally used since that day when Abraham weighed the silver shekels in purchasing the burial ground of Ephron, the Hittite. It may be that there are other Vermont factories that can point with equal pride to a century of existence, but in three respects E. and T. Fairbanks and Company have a unique record. For 100 years the same product has been made on the same spot and under the same firm name. Their celebration July 4-6 deserves recording because of its historical features as well as the official recognition it received from the Vermont Historical Society in the speakers furnished for the various functions. But before reciting some of the interesting details of a most successful celebration the story of the invention of the scale should be told.

It was in 1815 that Major Joseph Fairbanks came from Brimfield, Mass., to St. Johnsbury where he bought for the paltry sum of \$300 five acres of land and the water rights at the falls on Sleeper's river. His eldest son, Erastus, had come to St. Johnsbury three years before to study law, but his eyes failing him he started a general store in Wheelock. The two younger sons of Major Fairbanks, Thaddeus and Joseph, came to St. Johnsbury shortly after their father. The latter with Thaddeus, then barely twenty-one years old, started a small gristmill and a sawmill on the site of what is today the largest scale factory on this continent. Erastus, after a mercantile experience in Wheelock, East St. Johnsbury, and Barnet—where his biographer naively says, "commercial success though moderate was not satisfactory"—came to St. Johnsbury to market the wooden wagons which his brother Thaddeus had been making. One of these is now in the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury. But the first patent that young Thaddeus received was for a cast iron plow, granted in April, 1826. The farmers looked askance at this new fangled

product, declaring it would soon break in pieces and that the iron would poison their crops, but the civilized world now uses the modifications of what Mr. Fairbanks invented over 100 years ago. A year later he received a patent on a "diving flue" stove. This is quaintly described in a newspaper advertisement of that period as follows:

"By means of the rising flue and rolling damper, the draft is increased to any desirable degree, and the oven, which is large, is easily tempered at the will of the user and is never liable to burn or scorch."

Thaddeus Fairbanks also discovered the method of cooling now universally used in refrigeration. He secured a patent and then gave it away as he had neither the time or the money to develop it. These rights were afterwards valued at a million dollars.

The hemp craze which swept through New England a century ago brings the platform scale into the picture. Thaddeus had secured a patent on an improved hempdresser and the two brothers under the firm name of E. and T. Fairbanks were building hemp dressing machines. The wagon loads of hemp were weighed on a steelyard, the load being very crudely suspended in a gallows frame, and the weight was far from accurate. A long stick of timber was the lever; from the short arms of the frame, chains were hung that could be hooked around the cart axle, with a platform suspended from the long arm on which weights were placed. The idea finally came to the young inventor of supporting a platform upon an "A" shaped lever, with the tip of the lever connected to the steelyard by a rod. While pondering over this discovery in the early hours of the morning it occurred to him that with two "A" shaped levers, or four straight levers meeting at the steelyard rod, he could secure four knife edge supports for his platform, from all of which the leverage as related to the steelyard beam might be the same. As a practical weighing machine that was the birth of the modern scale. Later Mr. Fairbanks designed the portable scale, the railroad track scale and many other modifications.

The scale industry started in a small wooden building at the falls on the river with less than a dozen workmen and an invested capital of \$4,000. Thaddeus made his plans in the night and molded the iron in the little foundry in the daytime. Joseph

Fairbanks abandoned his law business and formed with his other two brothers the firm of E. and T. Fairbanks and Company. Erastus Fairbanks remained at the head of the firm for 30 years and was twice Governor of Vermont. Thaddeus kept busy for 55 years in designing new scales. He had 32 patents for scales, receiving on his ninetieth birthday a patent for a water heater. Joseph Fairbanks was in the firm 22 years, his business acumen and successful salesmanship greatly adding to the success of the business with total sales doubling every three years. At first the brothers were the firm's only salesmen. Erastus and Thaddeus traveled through New England while Joseph went to Cuba via a Mississippi packet boat. Later the firm employed "itinerant agents," as they were then called, at \$500 a year. One of them in 1836 was given "rights in Michigan and the Northwest Territory which is attached to the government of Michigan." Scales were sold on the instalment plan and a receipt is still on file from a Scituate, Mass., purchaser who paid \$25 down "for one eight part of the Hay Scales lately erected at his harbour." The early development of the foreign trade is most remarkable. In 1835 Thaddeus Fairbanks was granted a patent in England. In 1846 selling arrangements had been made to take care of the Chinese trade. Scales were sold in Honolulu and Havana in the next two years and the South American market was opened up. Even before the Civil War, the St. Johnsbury product had gone around the world and was probably better known in foreign parts than any other product manufactured in the United States. Difficulty was experienced in finding in any text book or encyclopedia the metric system, but the Boston saleshouse finally obtained the tables from a young man who had recently come from Paris.

High honors have been awarded the firm at every world's fair, but the highest laurels came to the inventor. Chief among these was the Knightly Cross of the Imperial Order of Francis Joseph which came to Mr. Fairbanks in 1873 from the Emperor of Austria. Sir Thaddeus Fairbanks, as he was ever afterwards called, received later decorations from the King of Siam and the Bey of Tunis. It was to recognize the accomplishments of a great Vermont inventor that so many thousands came to St. Johnsbury on July 4, at the centennial celebration of the building of the platform scale.

Favored with perfect weather the celebration opened on the

afternoon with an historical parade of gaily decorated floats. There were over 30 floats in line and the judges based their awards of the liberal prizes on the historical value of the picturizations. The first prize went to the Community Club of St. Johnsbury Center which had a replica of the First church in St. Johnsbury, one-fifth the actual size, with the choir dressed in century old costumes and singing the old-fashioned hymns. The Business and Professional Woman's Club captured the second prize with their reproduction of a quilting party at the home of Mrs. Lois Fairbanks a century ago. The candle dipping scene in a rustic float of the Woman's Relief Corps was awarded third prize. Many others were of a marked historical character. The St. John de Crevecoeur Chapter, D. A. R., exhibited a model of the first house in St. Johnsbury, built in 1787 by the founder of the town, Jonathan Arnold. All the characters in this float were direct descendants of Dr. Arnold. The St. Johnsbury lodge of Elks presented Betsy Ross making the first American flag and the C. H. Goss Company reproduced the old Wheelock store that Erastus Fairbanks started in 1814, with everything in the float except the men themselves over 100 years old. The Cary Maple Sugar Company showed the manufacture of maple sugar and the Twin State Gas and Electric Company picturized the evolution of manufacturing from 1830 to the electrical age of 1930.

The parade was followed by the presentation of the historical pageant on the Underclyffe lawn where over 5,000 people had assembled. Written and directed by Mrs. Elise West Quaife of New York, its thirteen episodes vividly and beautifully portrayed the evolution of the scale from the crude methods of weighing merchandise of the ancients to the modern mechanism of the twentieth century. Several hundred people were in the cast and chorus, with the costumes and the scenery most appropriate to the different periods. An unexpected personal touch was given by the appearance on the stage of a great-great grandson of Sir Thaddeus Fairbanks—Charles Cotter, the seven-year-old son of Dr. Lawrence and Mrs. Beatrice Fairbanks Cotter of New York.

A perfect summer day closed with a banquet at the St. Johnsbury House at which P. C. Brooks of New York, president of E. and T. Fairbanks and Company, presided. It was a happy suggestion to conduct this function as an old-fashioned town meeting with the town officials in Colonial costume. Arthur F.

Stone, a grandson of Erastus Fairbanks, was Moderator; Perley F. Hazen officiated as Clerk, and Elwin A. Silsby was the Beadle. The two latter had long records of service with the scale company, giving many delightful reminiscences. Gov. John E. Weeks spoke of the distinguished public record of two former presidents of the corporation, Erastus Fairbanks and his son Horace, both Governors of Vermont, and of another son of Erastus and president of the company, Franklin Fairbanks, who had been Speaker of the House. Representing by invitation the Vermont Historical Society, Mason S. Stone, one of the vice presidents, paid a high tribute to the three brothers that started a great industry a century ago. The famous inventors of the State were eulogized by Ralph E. Flanders of Springfield, while the industrial progress of Vermont in the last century was presented in interesting facts and figures by Benjamin Williams of Proctor. Other speakers were Henry J. Fuller of New York, who began his career in the St. Johnsbury factory; Dr. C. A. Cramton and Carl H. Ranger of St. Johnsbury; Thomas McMillan, president of the Canadian branch of Fairbanks, Morse & Co., of Montreal; J. J. Scully, also of Montreal, and general manager of the Canadian Pacific Railway; Edgar R. Brown of St. Johnsbury. The latter expressed the appreciation of the St. Johnsbury people for all the prosperity that had come to the community from this industry and the notable contributions to the town's welfare of its founders and their descendants.

The features of Saturday's program though not all connected with the scale centenary were closely linked to the general celebration. The ladies of St. John de Crevecoeur Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated a marker to the founder of the town, Dr. Jonathan Arnold, on the site of the first house that he built in 1787. Here a brief tribute was given to this distinguished pioneer by Arthur F. Stone. The laying of the corner stone of Fuller Memorial Hall at St. Johnsbury Academy, founded in 1842 by the three brothers that started the scale business, was performed by the generous donor, Henry J. Fuller of New York, who gave the building in memory of his father, Dr. Homer T. Fuller, a former principal. Here an inspiring and brilliant address was given by a native Vermonter and graduate of the school, Dr. Ozora S. Davis of Chicago. The closing feature of the afternoon was the unveiling of a tablet presented to the

scale company by the citizens of St. Johnsbury. President F. E. Bailey of the Chamber of Commerce presented the memorial which was accepted by President P. C. Brooks. Officially representing the Vermont Historical Society Walter H. Crockett of Burlington followed with an address on "Vermont's Place in Industry." The tablet bears these words:

1830

1930

THIS TABLET ERECTED BY THE  
CITIZENS OF ST. JOHNSBURY  
IN APPRECIATION OF  
ONE HUNDRED YEARS  
MANUFACTURE OF  
FAIRBANKS SCALES  
AT THIS LOCATION  
BY  
E. AND T. FAIRBANKS AND CO.

A union religious service was held in the South Congregational church Sunday morning with an historical address by the Rev. George Avery Neeld pastor of the North Congregational church. His theme was "The Realization of a Great Ideal" and fitting tributes were paid to the founders of the industry and to their descendants who for so many years continued in the footsteps of their fathers. The highly successful celebration of the centennial of one of Vermont's largest industrial establishments closed with a children's parade Sunday afternoon. The young folks marched to one of the local theaters singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers," where short addresses were given by the Rev. J. W. Dwyer, pastor of St. Aloysius church, and J. Rolf Searles, Esq.

## NOTES

The uniform and saddle used by General Stannard at the Battle of Gettysburgh, together with some other coats, swords, guns, a pair of boots, shot and shells, formerly his property, have been presented to the Vermont Historical Society by Stannard Post No. 2, G. A. R., of Burlington. They have been cleaned and placed on display.

One of the country's most distinguished jurists, who has made the study of the Battle of Gettysburgh a hobby, has given an interesting comment on the article entitled *Vermont at Gettysburgh, an Address by Geo. H. Scott of Co. G., 13th Vt. Proceedings Vol. I, No. 2, p. 51:*

"Nothing is more curious than the ideas about the Civil War current in 1870, and what we now know to be the truth after the original orders and correspondence have been published. I am very glad indeed to have had this bit of evidence. When the writer is talking about what he actually saw in the fighting done by the Thirteenth Vermont, he is quite in accord with what we now know to have been the facts. For the rest, some of his statements are most amusing."

Henry N. Stevens of London, Honorary Member of the Vermont Historical Society, died April 26, 1930. Mr. Stevens was the son of Henry Stevens "of Vermont," the famous antiquarian and bookseller, and continued the book business which his father had started. He was noted for his work on the history and bibliography of America. He presented to the Society his book on the First Delineation of the New World, and the first use of the name America on a map. He also presented a collection of miscellaneous papers relating to his family.

A reward has been offered for an authentic contemporary portrait of Ethan Allen, by John Pell, author of the recent biography of Allen, and editor of the North American Review. Despite wide publicity, no portrait has yet been discovered. The absence of such a portrait is one of the puzzles of our history.

Allen is known to have been in the neighborhood of portrait painters at a time when he had sufficient leisure to sit. He must have been the sort of subject any painter would desire, and the sort of individual who would have liked to have a portrait made. There are, we believe, letters in existence which refer to such a portrait, but no trace of the writers or of the painting has been discovered. The various statues were made long after his death, based on descendants said to resemble him. A wooden statue made soon after his death has disappeared.

The Old Constitution House Association of Windsor, although practically out of debt, finds that the number of annual contributors, which is made up largely of local people, is gradually growing less and less. As a means of keeping the building open it is rented as a tea house. Since April over 2000 persons have registered, and many others have come without registering. In this way people from all over the United States have become acquainted with a building which is beyond question the most important structure extant in Vermont, of historical significance in the Revolutionary period. The D. A. R. have done much to stimulate interest and to make the building attractive. Many articles of interest are displayed. Although this association is local, its aim concerns the entire State. It deserves support and encouragement. A visit to the Old Constitution House should do more to visualize the stirring session at which, under the excitement of the news of Burgoyne's approach, and the enforced confinement of a terrific storm our first Constitution was adopted, than hours of school room study and much historical reading.

It is hoped that the articles in this issue on the Historical Societies of Orleans and of Windham Counties will be followed by accounts of the various other historical societies, museums, and collections, in or pertaining to Vermont. Many of these are practically unknown outside of their own districts, but they frequently have material of at least a state-wide interest. It ought to be the function of this publication to make known their history and their activities, by printing similar articles, and frequent short notes.

Bella C. Landauer has made an interesting contribution to the preservation of fugitive objects, in printing privately at the Harbor Press of New York, *Some Early Vermont Invitations*, reproduced from her own collection. Nearly forty specimens, dating from 1804 to 1858, are given, of invitations to dances, balls, and levees. These invitations often listed the names of the committees in charge, and indicated the sort of entertainment, the price, and the type of music. Typographically many of them are pleasant, and show the changes in manner and style of printing. The reproductions are beautifully executed, and the little book as a whole would be an ornament to any Vermont collection. The number of copies is limited to sixty, which will make it a rarity.

Vermonters and many others will regret the loss occasioned by the death, early in September, of Col. Robert M. Thompson, who has for many years contributed to the work of his son-in-law, S. H. P. Pell, owner and restorer of Fort Ticonderoga. No place outside of Vermont has so great a significance to Vermonters, historically speaking, as this fort. Until the French were ousted, settlement by the Colonists in Vermont was impossible. Later, its possession by the British made imperative the spectacular capture by the Green Mountain Boys under Ethan Allen. Its recapture by Burgoyne imperilled Vermont, and its continued possession by the British was a large factor in Vermont's remaining independent. The restoration commenced over twenty years ago by Mr. Pell has made it a living monument of the greatest interest and inspiration to the thousands who visit it each year. The fact of Colonel Thompson's assistance in this work has made him a benefactor to whom Vermont will always be grateful.

It is expected that, in a subsequent issue, an article will be presented to the readers of the *Proceedings* by Mr. Pell, describing the recent restoration of the west and north demi-lunes, and the south barracks.

The desirability has been suggested of a State Commission to investigate the question of proper preservation of the various public documents now located in the towns, county seats, and elsewhere throughout the State. Without great difficulty or

expense a preliminary survey could be made, which would show what is needed. In Connecticut, the State Library has gathered from such sources a vast quantity of documents which were of no real importance as local records, but taken together and properly classified, became of the greatest historical value. These records have been carefully mounted on silk, whenever that was necessary, and indexed by name and subject matter, etc., in the most thorough way. In Vermont there are many similar records, done up in bundles, or lying about loose in the town or court clerks' safes. Some of these records have been stolen, some have gone to pieces, and some have been given away or thrown away. This is not the fault of the officials who have these records in charge, for frequently these papers are not those required by law to be kept, and also, no clerk can be expected to watch every move of every person who comes to inspect documents which no longer have practical value. It seems as if some method could be devised for removing to a central and fireproof building for preservation and indexing all the documents which are no longer in use as records. Then we could start in on the problem of preserving the remaining documents, either by assisting in having old volumes rebound and strengthened, or by removing the originals to a suitable repository, and substituting for them typed copies certified as to accuracy. The editor would like to receive comments on this suggestion.

In the *Proceedings* of 1928, a sketch was given of Lieut. Col. Joseph Wait, a Revolutionary soldier who died on his return from an expedition into Canada, September, 1776, and was buried in North Clarendon, Vermont, at the place now called Howley's Corner. The ancient headstone with the quaint effigy of Col. Wait, erected of Vermont marble by his brothers in arms, remains in excellent condition. The iron fence which had become delapidated, has been replaced by a new fence, erected at the expense of Conant Wait of Los Angeles, California, through the courtesy of Postmaster Charles H. West of Rutland.